CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Computer Users' Group
December, 1981 Vol 4 No 4

Hofstadter Lecture

On November 26, at 8:30 P.M.., the Science College presented a lecture by Dr. Douglas Hofstadter of the University of Indiana, Department of Computer Science. Dr. Hofstadter is the author of the Pulitzer prize- winning book Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid and the author of a bimonthly column in Scientific American called "Metamagical Themas". The subject of the lecture was "The meaning of the word 'I' - or - Who's pushing whom around inside the cranium." The title might give you an idea of the subject matter; suffice it to say that it involved pinball machines, English hedge mazes, pucks, SYMM-balls (Small Yellow Magnetic Marbles, of course), and the careenium (a place in which SYMMs careen about). The lecture took the form of a conversation between Achilles and the Tortoise, two characters who appeared several times in his book. Socrates and Plato would have loved it. We did.

Open Meeting

The Computer Centre held their third open meeting on Wednesday, November 18. For the first time, they had nothing new to announce (other than the fact that there was nothing new (now I'm sounding like Hofstadter)); instead, they simply reported the current status of the Cyber, some of their future plans, asked for some feedback from the audience.

We've covered most of the items they mentioned before; new items include:

- Cluster is no more. Instead, we will have JETS - the Job Entry Terminal Subsystem. Six of one, half a dozen of the other...

- A screen-oriented text editor will be made availble as the first step in the implementation of JETS. About time.

- To relieve class 00 congestion, 25 extra ports will be added to the PACX.

- The Centre will attempt to return those balky Lanparscope XT-50 terminals. the replacements will be Televideo 910s.

- The Centre will begin using newsprint paper (sometimes known as toilet paper) in January, as part of an effort to save costs.

That's about it; there were a few special-interest items, and a lot of irrelevent questions.

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Computer Ethics

The Computer Users' Group is trying to get the Computer Science Department to offer a course on Computer Ethics. We feel thayt it's about time that computer scientists took on the responsibility of at least looking at some of the ethical questions ranging from military uses of computers to public awareness to artificial intelligence. We have a file containing our proposal to the department on our account available to all users. To get this file, type "OLD,ETHICS/UN=CCUSC51". We would like to hear your comments and ideas on the subject.

PODs

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteer PODs that helped us out this term. So... Thanks Dave, Ken, Ron, Richard, Martin, Louis, Nelson, and Franco. Special thanks to Nelson and Richard for putting in lots of overtime.

Grad Rings

Anyone out there in Computer Science who expects to graduate in December '81, April '82 or summer '82 should see Tom Hill in the E.C.S.A. office (H-880-10) about the Computer Science grad rings. The rings are silver and cost $60.00 with a $30.00 deposit being due on December 21st.

Complaints...

Have a look in H-968 (the terminal room).... it looks like a scene out of Mother Goose. Specifically, the Three Little Pigs.

....and Congrats

Our seminars return next semester. Thanks to Larry, Harold, Ron, Dave, John Barry, Emon Egan, Nabil Naccache, Nelson, Franco and Robert Goliss. Your certificates arrive soon.

Season's Ravings

Happy Chanuka, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Joyful Exam Writing. See you in January, if we make it.